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Statement on  
Nuclear Power Plants, Initiative Statute  
Before the  
Planning Committee  
Los Angeles City Council  
January 16, 1976

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Los Angeles Department of Water and Power

*no slip*

My name is Carl M. Tamaki. I am the interim General Manager and Chief Engineer of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

The Department management is opposed to the initiative because it takes away the viable nuclear option from the California utilities at a time when all options must be considered to meet the energy needs of the citizens of the State of California.

The initiative appears to have been deliberately framed to delay resolution of its requirements beyond the time limits it prescribes. For example, the initiative requires that by June 1977, present federal laws limiting insurance liability be removed or the power output of all California nuclear plants be reduced to 60 per cent of rated capacity. This is, in our opinion, an insurmountable roadblock to constructing new nuclear power plants in California. If a plant is allowed to operate at only 60 per cent of rated capacity, this will affect the per kilowatt cost of nuclear plants, and for all practical purposes, would make it almost impossible to finance such a facility.

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Furthermore, we believe that the likelihood of Congressional action to comply with the requirement in the initiative on insurance liability within one year is extremely remote. We believe it is

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unrealistic to expect, in a matter of such nationwide importance as nuclear power, that federal law would be modified by Congress to meet the requirements of one state.

Another requirement of the initiative is that the legislature make a determination regarding the effectiveness of all safety systems of every nuclear power plant in the state. We believe this requirement is impossible to meet within the time period specified, and therefore, would result in derating existing plants.

Passage of the initiative would effectively prevent the construction of new nuclear power plants in California and halt work on plants under construction.

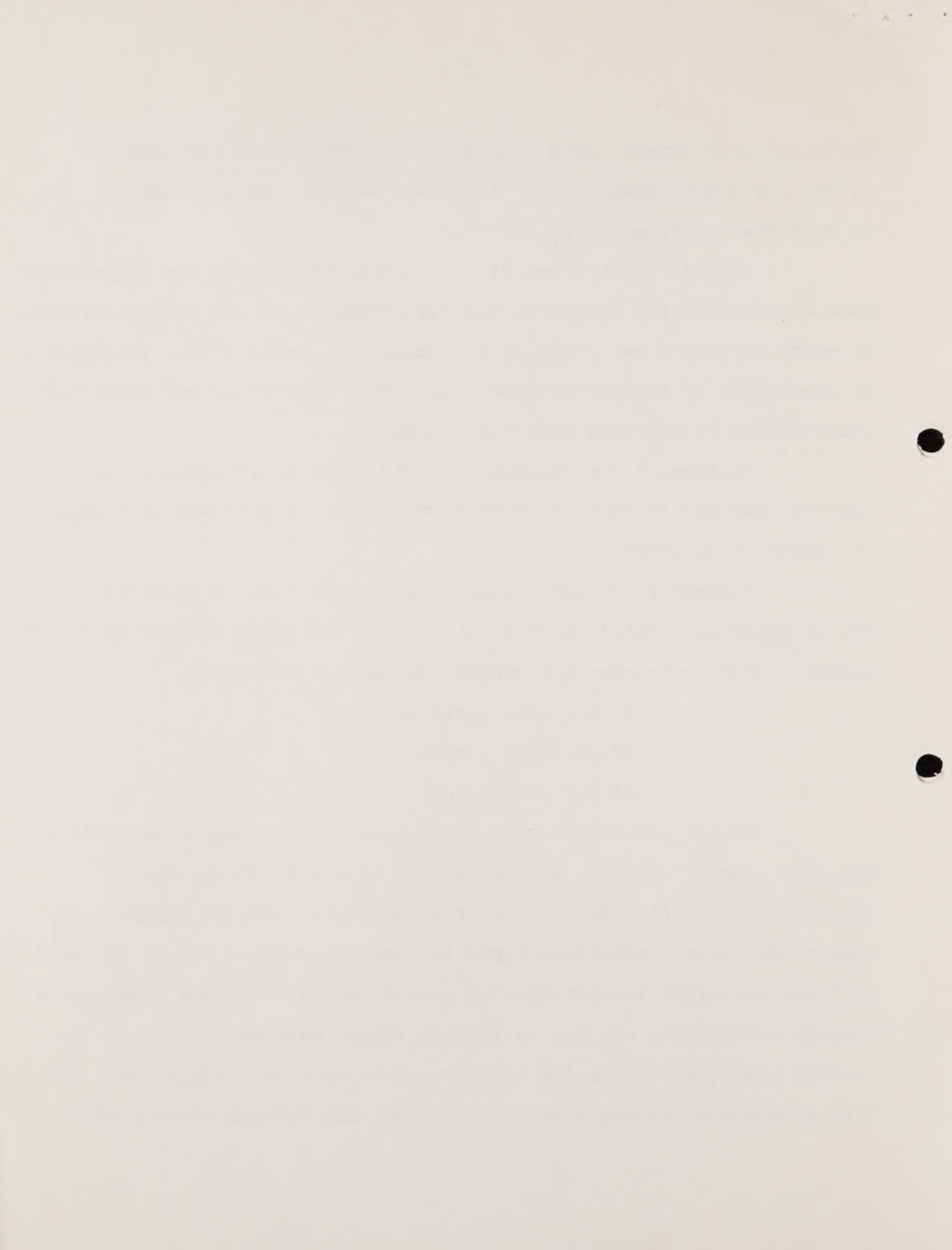
Presently the Department of Water and Power's electric energy resources include both fossil-fueled and hydroelectric generating plants. These resources are roughly divided as follows:

57 per cent - oil and gas

22 per cent - hydro

21 per cent - coal

As you can see, Los Angeles is heavily dependent upon oil and gas. During 1976, we expect to burn 16.3 million barrels of low-sulfur fuel oil. We believe it is essential that we change our energy base from predominantly oil to coal and nuclear due to the high cost and uncertain availability of low-sulfur oil obtained from mostly foreign sources and subject to the new energy diplomacy. During the next 20 years, both coal and nuclear plants must be built to meet our load growth and replace existing high cost oil-burning power plants.





We recognize that strong conservation programs and increased efficiency in the utilization of electricity will reduce the rate of growth of electric energy. The Council is very familiar with energy conservation programs. During the 1973 oil embargo, your Council, in cooperation with Mayor Bradley, instituted a mandatory conservation program, and the people of Los Angeles responded magnificently by reducing their consumption by approximately 17 per cent. Since then, this City has continued an aggressive program of encouraging conservation among residential, commercial and industrial customers.

During 1975, the Department of Water and Power experienced a 4.8 per cent increase in electric consumption over 1974, but consumption is still below 1973 levels by approximately 6.5 per cent. We have concluded that, although conservation is helping, our load is continuing to grow, and we must take the necessary steps to meet the needs of our customers as mandated by the City Charter.

Large, new buildings continue to be built throughout the city. Three new hotels are planned, or under construction, including a 1,500 room complex near the Civic Center. The Century City complex continues to grow. Redevelopment in the harbor area and throughout the city means new electrical energy demands on our system. The Good Samaritan Hospital and the proposed LNG plant in the harbor area are examples of facilities which will add substantial load to our system. Federal and state clean air and water programs for the Los Angeles and Southern California area will require more, not less, electrical





energy. The rapid transit system proposed for Los Angeles only a few weeks ago will require substantial amounts of electric power--in excess of 50,000 kilowatts.

I could continue, but the most important demand for more, not less energy comes from our citizens, many of whom are just now reaching a standard of living that only a few enjoyed in the past. They will require more, not less, energy, if the dream and promise of upward mobility and a better way of life is to be theirs.

The goal of the federal government's Project Independence is to reduce our country's dependence on foreign oil. The Department firmly supports this goal, and to achieve it in a timely manner, we must expeditiously shift to nuclear and coal plants for the generation of electrical energy. Other types of generation such as wind, solar, fusion and geothermal will not, in our opinion, be available in sufficient quantities or in time to meet our near-term needs.

The Department has investigated development of geothermal power resources in the Inyo-Mono County area and is continuing its investigation in this area. As a joint venture with the Department of Public Works, we have demonstrated the feasibility of using methane gas from sanitary landfills for electric generation. This utilization of methane fuel generation could ultimately produce 50,000 kilowatts of power for Los Angeles and reduce the need for up to 650,000 barrels of fuel oil a year.

While solar and fusion energies appear to be promising resources that may contribute to our long-term needs, it is extremely doubtful that they can play an important role in our resource program before the year 2000. Natural gas can no longer be considered a fuel for electrical generation because of its unavailability as boiler fuel.





In reference to solar power, Los Angeles has submitted a proposal for federal funding of a major solar heating and cooling demonstration unit to be sited at the Convention Center. The Department is working with other city departments in connection with this proposed project, which could be operational in late 1976 or early 1977.

I have mentioned earlier the need for the Department to change its energy base. In this transition, coal will play an important role because of its availability and the shorter lead time required in siting coal fueled electric generating plants as contrasted with nuclear. Presently, the Department is a part owner of two coal fueled plants; the Mohave plant in Southern Nevada and the Navajo plant in Arizona; and we are investigating participation in three others in Nevada and Utah.

However, it is unrealistic for Californians to expect that major portions of their electrical energy needs will be met by plants located in neighboring states.

In the area of nuclear resources, the Department of Water and Power, since 1972, has been conducting feasibility, environmental, and siting studies on the proposed San Joaquin Nuclear Project in Kern County which, when completed in 1989, will supply a significant portion of California's and Los Angeles' electric energy requirements.

Therefore, we believe passage of the initiative will severely affect the adequacy of the future electric power supply of the City of Los Angeles. It will deprive our citizens of the benefits of one of the most important proven energy resources and adversely affect the economic well-being of the city and state.

It is important to note that the...

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In conclusion, the Department management is opposed to the initiative because it takes away the viable nuclear option from the California utilities at a time when all options must be considered to meet the energy needs of the citizens of the State of California.

I appreciate this opportunity to present our views on this very important issue. Thank you very much. .



